



Public Affairs Division, 1100 Spaatz Street, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio 45433-7102
(937) 255-4704 ext 330, 331, 332, 333 <http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/>

DIVISIONS

Performing the mission of the National Museum of the United States Air Force is a complex undertaking. It requires expertise across a broad range of disciplines. Various museum divisions with diverse responsibilities help the museum operate smoothly, often combining efforts to support activities such as aircraft rollouts, exhibit openings and special events. Divisions include:

Education

Through a variety of educational programs, the Education Division seeks to inspire tomorrow's airmen, pilots, engineers, scientists and air power advocates. The division reaches more than 97,000 students, teachers and other individuals through nearly 1,300 programs. Hands-on activities, workshops, tours, literature, audio-visual loan programs and other outreach efforts carry military aviation history and aerospace concepts to these audiences.

Exhibits

The Exhibits Division designs and builds sensory-appealing exhibits to bring history to life for museum visitors. The division incorporates mannequins, sound effects, theatrical lighting, artifacts and other components into dioramas to create dynamic scenes, dramatizing and personalizing the story depicted and placing aircraft in context. This approach to exhibit design evokes human emotions and personalizes the vision, courage and achievements of airmen, patriots and aerospace pioneers.

Collection Management

Staff members in the Collection Management Division steward the museum system's considerable aircraft and artifact collection, ensuring accountability for all U.S. Air Force historical property and providing exhibit support. The division manages a massive collection that includes more than 300 aircraft, missiles and aerospace vehicles and more than 4,500 historical items on display at the museum. It also oversees 65,000 items stored in the museum's collection facilities, nearly 31,000 items on loan to field museums and domestic and international heritage sites, and more than 6,000 historical artifacts and aerospace vehicles on loan to 450 civilian museums, cities, municipalities and veterans' organizations throughout the world.

Research

Serving on multiple fronts, the Research Division ensures that timely, relevant and accurate Air Force historical information is presented to the public through a variety of means. The division manages the museum's ever-expanding document and imagery collection, researches and writes exhibit text, and provides historical guidance for exhibit development, aircraft restoration, staff projects and public and media queries. Staff members assist in many other ways, leading tours, delivering talks, and participating in media interviews, among other activities.

Restoration

Preserving the Air Force's proud legacy, the Restoration Division restores aircraft and aerospace vehicles to historically accurate and visually striking levels. Division members are well versed in a variety of skills ranging from machine and woodworking expertise to precision craftsmanship in sheet metal and painting. Their knowledge of aircraft spans years of technology – from World War I fabric covered

aircraft to the elite fighters of today's Air Force. Restoration workers maintain the museum's vast aircraft collection, move aircraft into exhibit position and work hand-in-hand with the Exhibits and Research Divisions and museum management on ever-changing gallery displays. The Restoration Division relies heavily on a dedicated, talented cadre of volunteers in accomplishing its mission. Restoration "Behind-the-Scenes" tours are offered weekly to museum visitors.

Plans and Programs

The Plans and Programs Office provides guidance, support and direct management for various museum functions. Duties include administering the museum's aircraft exchange program and managing all aspects of the Static Display Program, which authorizes the loan of U.S. Air Force historical aircraft to qualified organizations. The office manages the civilian museum certification program, which applies a rigorous process to qualify civilian institutions for receiving aerospace vehicles via a loan from the Air Force. Plans and Programs directs aerospace vehicle acquisition and deployment for the U.S. Air Force Heritage Program (USAFHP), evaluating aircraft declared excess to the service's active inventory to determine historical significance and possible allocation to the museum, a field museum or other qualified programs. The office serves as the primary office for museum policy formation, implementation and review, and serves as a primary point of contact for the USAFHP.

Operations

The Operations Division manages the museum's more than one million square feet of facilities and grounds and helps ensure the safety of visitors, staff, and volunteers and the security of the historical collection. Division staff members provide vital logistical and security support to museum events and are responsible for working with the Air Force Museum Foundation on museum expansion efforts.

Public Affairs

Seeking to expand museum visibility regionally, nationally and globally, the Public Affairs Division promotes the institution's activities, initiatives and achievements to the public through tourism agencies news media, community groups and historical organizations. The division builds awareness of the museum and America's Air Force through its development of a variety of promotional materials, advertising and marketing initiatives, management of the museum's Web site, interface with the media, development and presentation of briefings and trade show participation.

Special Events

Each year, the Special Events Division plans and executes nearly 800 events that help convey the Air Force story and the military aviation spirit. Indoor and outdoor events range from flying events and Air Force Band of Flight concerts to ceremonies and guest lecturers. Special events staff support aircraft rollouts, exhibit openings, reunion groups and memorial dedications. Prominent recurring major events include the bi-annual Dawn Patrol Rendezvous World War I Fly-In and the annual Radio-Controlled Model Aircraft Air Show.

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